

NOVEMBER, 1935

15 Cents

# The American MUSIC LOVER

A REVIEW FOR THE MODERN HOME

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# The American Music Lover

## for November

### 1935

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MODEST PETROVITCH MOUSSORGSKY . . . .

from the painting by I. Y. Repin

## EDITORIAL

THE value of jazz—its status as music —seems to be one of the most disputed points in the world of contemporary music. It has incited and continues to incite seemingly endless controversies — none of which to date can be said definitely to have led to any satisfactory conclusion as to its relative merits. Many musicians refuse to concede it any status — while others look upon it as a force and an inspiration.

Those who acclaim jazz usually begin by telling us that it is a true reflection of modern living — of its rhythmic energy, its cacophonous sounds, etc. And they inform us, not without scorn or a patronizing lift of the eyebrows, that to understand and appreciate jazz one must be attuned to or in harmony with one's own times. And those who dislike jazz usually start off by informing us that it is vulgar, commonplace and a reflection of a *new* pulse of living which is neither sane nor healthy.

Of course, both of these viewpoints are not without their foundations of truth. It is a foregone conclusion, however, that an aspect of life is not to be accepted or viewed in the same manner by two people whose psychological reactions are fundamentally different, any more than the reactions of two people who view a scenic wonder from opposing points are going to be similar. Yet — one point that is not always true, that those who uphold jazz make against those who do not, is the assertion that the latter are not attuned to their own times. We know many musicians who are thoroughly in relations with their own times in more ways than one, and yet who are basically opposed to jazz, not

necessarily as an expression, but as an art-product. The point they probably intend to bring out or to convey is the commonplace quality of ephemeral appeal of the product. And, in this, they are assuredly right; for, admitting that jazz has advanced and become a richer product than the dance music of a generation or two back, the fact still remains and must be admitted that this has not in any way altered its short-lived appeal.

So, it will be noted the value of jazz — its status as music — may well be a controversial subject. And, it is because we admit jazz as such and also because we realize it as an expression that is generally misunderstood that we are permitting those who profess to know it to explain it to our readers. If the status of jazz was fully established, such an article as Mr. Archetti's *Hot Jazz or Swing Music*, which appears in this issue, would of course be superfluous.

. . . . .

By way of introduction — Sasha Ostrofsky, who contributes our article on Moussorgsky, is a Russian-American pianist and teacher who resides in New York City. Mr. Ostrofsky is preparing a number of articles for us, several of which will deal with piano recordings—their value to the teacher and the student and to the amateur musician. J. M. Howard, who contributes this month's article on the radio, is a Chicago teacher and a discriminating music lover. Mr. Howard also is preparing several articles for us, presenting his own ideas on the reproduction of music in the home.

# Hot Jazz or Swing Music

By ENZO ARCHETTI

**T**HE familiar proverb, "*A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house,*" could well be rewritten to read: "Music is not without honour, save in its own country, and among its own people." Time has certainly proven this a truth. There is little point now in quoting examples from the past, for we have new examples among us. One of the most glaring of these is Hot Jazz — a true "Made in America" product.

Whatever may be the ultimate position of jazz in the world of music, there is no denying that today, to the Americans of this generation in particular, consciously or unconsciously, it is a definite part of their lives. Hot Jazz — or, as it has been more appropriately renamed, Swing-Music — the real jazz; not the insipid and weak-kneed tunes and rhythms which are blared from every radio station in the country, by equally insipid and weak-kneed dance orchestras and crooners.

## *An American Product*

The music which will leave its impression, and, in fact, help to create in the future what is now vaguely called "American Music," because it is the pulse of American life is this so-called Hot Jazz. Its rhythm, so as to speak, is something definitely, undefinably American — as American as skyscrapers and the Grand Canyon. These unmistakable yet intangible qualities which defy imitation make this jazz probably the only distinctly American product. American politics, culture, business, or standards may never influence the life of the rest of the world as indelibly as this type of American jazz has up to now.

It is a lamentable fact that Swing

Music — the real jazz — is least understood and least appreciated in the country of its origin and by the people of whom it is a part. The average American's conception and appreciation of jazz is limited to the popular dance tunes as presented by the popular orchestras like Rudy Vallee's, Paul Whiteman's, Wayne King's, etc. If he ventures outside of this innocuous and everlastingly similar music, it is but to indulge briefly in some of the caterwaulings of a Cab Calloway under the impression that this is Hot Jazz. But the truth of the matter is that the listener does not know what Hot Jazz really is. And he probably does not know who Ellington, Armstrong, Venuti, Redman, Carter, Henderson, Russell, Nichols, Goodman — the real Hot Jazz exponents — are; or for that matter what they represent in the world of jazz; and he probably does not know that the finest orchestras in the world to play this type of music are also in America.

## *European Appreciation*

Real appreciation and understanding of this distinctly American art — for art it is — an art emanating from the soil and from the people — have progressed further in England, France, and Holland than in America. They have accepted the new music whole-heartedly, seriously, because they realize it is the music of our day; and that it is a veritable art-form — maybe transitory, maybe permanent — but a form nevertheless worthy of thought and study, and capable of expressing the restlessness, the energy, and the mental attitude of this generation more accurately and more effectively than the forms and music created by the so-called serious composers of today — the composers of what is usually classified as essential

music (as if Swing Music is any less essential!) These countries have carried their appreciation further. They have sponsored and encouraged the recording of Swing Music, even to the point of backing a special album issued on the plan similar to the Beethoven, Haydn, Wolf, and Sibelius Society issues: the Duke Ellington album. They have issued specially recorded, instructive discs for the purpose of teaching the principles of Swing Music and also for explaining the various kinds. Noteworthy among these are "Swing Music — Conversations About Jazz," Numbers 1, 2, and 3 by Leonard Hibbs (English Brunswick RT1, RT2, and RT3 — the first of a series of twelve records on this subject); "A Short Survey of Modern Rhythm," an album of eight records by outstanding Swing orchestras, intended to cover the entire field of Swing Music and to give concrete examples of the various styles, issued with an explanatory booklet (English Brunswick 02000/02007) — and some discs by Fred Elizalde and Christopher Stone titled: "From Jazz to Rhythm," and "Rhythm, Past and Present" (English Decca K637 and K669). And last, but not least, they have written many books and magazines on jazz. Recently a new book appeared in France, which is, without exaggeration, the best that has been written up to the present time and one which bids fair to become a classic and a universal handbook on the subject. This is Hugues Panassié's *Le Jazz Hot*.

### ***A Leading Critic***

Hugues Panassié is recognized as the outstanding critic in Europe on Swing Music. His views, as expressed in numerous newspaper and magazine articles and in his own magazine "Jazz Hot," are authoritative. His knowledge of the subject is astounding and has the uncanny ability of identifying nearly every swing artist, past and present, merely by his style of playing on phonograph records. It is indeed fortunate for the host of Swing Music lovers all over the world and for posterity in fact that he has chosen to record his opinions and knowledge in this splendid book. It is a book which can be recom-

mended to all — particularly to Americans; and to those who feel the power of Swing Music and appreciate its qualities but who do not know much about it; and especially to those who do not even know it exists. To the latter it will be a revelation. To the un-snobbish music lover who appreciates Swing Music — along with his Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, it will reveal thoughts which probably lurked in the recesses of his own mind, but which he could never express in just so many words. And to the "fans," who have been so aptly described by the English jazz-critic, Spike Hughes, as they "whose hysterical behaviour is equalled only by their lack of knowledge of any music that cannot be got on a ten-inch record," it will bring reason to cool their fanaticism and give them basic facts for their enthusiasm.

### ***About the Book . . .***

In the preface of *Le Jazz Hot*, the author briefly discusses the origin of jazz, its development, and the reasons it has not been taken seriously by the public and critics alike. After explaining the purpose of his book and cautioning the readers to take a sensible attitude when reading it, he gives in the first chapter an admirable essay to the nature of jazz music, the difference between it and "classical" music and the necessity for listening to it with a different frame of mind. His explanations are illuminating. At one point he says:

"Jazz distinguishes itself from other musical forms by this essential point: in music in general, the composer conceives and the performers try their best to reproduce what he has conceived, thus . . . ? execution is simply the means to render perceptible the musical thought of the composer. In jazz, on the contrary, the performer is more important. He takes a melody, often banal, which he transforms, more or less, either by improvising on it or by arranging, that is to say, he writes an 'arrangement' of this melody, which is then played by the whole orchestra . . . in jazz the player is not content with transmitting to his audience the thought of an-



other, but he himself creates, when playing an individual improvisation, the music we hear him play . . . . *Not to take into consideration the value of the orchestra in jazz is equivalent to remaining indifferent to the value of the composer in classic music.*"

In a discussion on the nature of jazz he further writes:

"While on the subject (of rhythm) it is necessary to point out the error of seeing in jazz nothing but music for dancing. Of course one can dance to jazz, therefore it is dance music. But it is also something else because it has a definite musical interest and deserves to be listened to for itself. One can dance to certain works of Rameau and Mozart. But one would not assert therefore that they are only dance music. It is the same with jazz."

The chapter continues with an attempt to define "swing," the most important element in good jazz. Here, it must be admitted, M. Panassié does not succeed too well, but it is evident that his inability to explain satisfactorily "swing" is not due to any lack of understanding on his part, but, rather, to the elusive nature of "swing" itself, which veritably defies description. He himself admits it:

### ***Difficult to Describe***

"When one attempts to define or explain swing, one runs into insurmountable difficulties. Up to the present time, no one has been able to furnish a precise definition. One can say 'There is swing in this playing, there is none in that' just as one says: 'This writing is poetic, that is not' without being able to explain clearly why . . . .

"To give a vague idea of it, it can be said that it is a kind of balance in the rhythm and melody which always carries with it a compelling attraction. Sometimes this attraction is only slightly apparent, more or less restrained; but it is always there."

Then follows a masterly description of a jazz orchestra, its various selections, the instruments usually employed, their uses as solo and ensemble instruments, and the special effects produced with them. He

attributes the general public's dislike of real jazz to the tone of the all-wind instrument band:

"Unfortunately, the listener usually does not analyze his displeasure and attributes erroneously to the nature of the music what is due to the tone of the orchestra. He makes the common mistake of being misled by appearances, and, without thinking, judges by the exterior. This is proven by the fact that one often hears people complain of 'discords' of jazz when speaking of a trumpet trio written with the simplest and most classical harmonies in the world. It is remarkable, that jazz played on the violin or on the piano pleases the public more than that performed on wind instruments. It is because the lover of classical music finds there, in spite of the different technique, a familiar tone which prevents him from losing his way and permits him to follow more easily the music he is listening to."

### ***Recordings Named***

It is noteworthy that throughout the entire book phonograph records are referred to frequently to illustrate certain points under discussion. The result is, that for those who own the particular discs mentioned or who have access to them in some way, the text takes on a significance that words alone could not convey. These are points, then, which stand out like bold face letters on a page printed in light type. A striking example of the effectiveness of such an illustration is found in the second chapter, in which the hot style in jazz is explained. The illustration used is the recording of *Three Little Words* and *Ring dem Bells* by Duke Ellington and his orchestra (Victor 22528) to emphasize the difference between a straight and a hot interpretation in jazz. There is surely not another more striking example of this difference on any one record in the entire catalog of the world's Hot Jazz discs. This disc, plus M. Panassié's excellent exposition of the qualities that make jazz hot, are the quintessence of the entire subject. In this chapter the hot jazz enthusiast will find his own ideas which somehow he

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# Radio Programs and the Listener

BY J. M. HOWARD

## I.

**R**ADIO — the most universal of man's invented diversions! — and since so universal limited by the common mean. This is as it should be — if the common mean is observed. In my opinion, however, radio advertisers tend to hit below the mark rather than take a chance and stray above the rather low level they designate as the "average listener."

Upon hearing snatches of a variety of programs to which I should certainly not chain myself, I have gained a mental picture of the "average listener" which is too distinct to forget. His most prominent characteristic is the newspaper which he is reading. Next is the cigar, cigarette or pipe he is smoking; and last the expression on his face of complete absorption in everything but what is coming out of the radio.

This indifference is a natural defense against constant exposure to bad and mediocre programs. The good programs are avoided because they do not provide such a soothing background of nonsense. Yes, soothing even when there is a blood and thunder melodrama going on — soothing because of the scientific fact that the ear tends to adjust itself to any oft-repeated noise and the mind is soothed by what has become familiar. This would be alright were it not that indifference leads to boredom and boredom is the opposite extreme of amusement.

Thus radio defeats itself, and wastes its great potentialities.

Of course there are some highly commendable efforts directed at the better half of the musical public, and these efforts should have all the publicity and

applause which they deserve. They are met on the one hand by the calloused indifference of the chronic radio addict and even his enmity due to misunderstanding and mistrust of that which aspires and which asks for a measure of cooperation from the listener. On the other hand we have the real lover of music, the one who uses his radio intelligently and profitably, but who, when it comes to making his opinion felt in the quarters where it would do some good, is strangely silent.

Naturally we must be broad in our conception of good programs—broad enough to include all variety of well-rendered, well-broadcasted music — but it is not too much to ask that more time should be given to the better type of classical music, which is now inadequately represented.

There are indications enough that a high type of symphony concert is broadly welcome to the "average listener," and that said listener is not yet so far gone in his apathy as my horrible picture suggests. In the first place there are the subscription-raising efforts of the *New York Philharmonic*, successful in eliciting financial response from a host of people to whom the Sunday Afternoon Concerts had become an indispensable offering of the winter radio season. The opera series from the Metropolitan were also materially successful from a radio standpoint. It would almost seem that the music lover would rather send in money than a word of thanks and approval. Not that many letters were not received in the *Philharmonic* drive — for there were a number of sympathetically grateful acknowledgments — but in the case where a manufacturer sponsors a good program and asks for comments, the music lover seems to smell commercialism and maintains a frigid silence which cannot but end in the pro-

gram being modified to the point where it gains a loud, if uncultured response.

Summer pop concerts in many of our big cities — such as the broadcasted series from Chicago — were invariably attended to overflowing by rich and poor, educated and ignorant indiscriminately. Since the radio music lover is so passive we must judge his importance by those who take advantage of free or inexpensive public concerts. And all the evidence shows that a good symphony music is popular music if it is easily available. Also popular priced opera groups, such as the *San Carlo*, draw capacity crowds to nearly every performance.

## 2.

Every year we have had the opportunity of hearing the great *New York Philharmonic* for a full two hour program on Sunday afternoons. The program has become an institution in thousands of American homes, and well deserves its success. It gives music lovers a chance to hear the foremost foreign conductors and the *Philharmonic's* great chief, Toscanini.

In past times, we have heard short series of broadcasts by both the *Philadelphia* and *Boston Symphonies*. (The latter has just been announced for a series of concerts again this year.) Mr. Stokowski being personally interested in the reproductive side of music, it can be truly said that his programs are most distinctively presented to the radio public.

In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* for January of this year, Mr. Stokowski outlines his suggestions for good programs: "American folk music, including, on the one hand, the powerful primitive jazz mainly created by our musicians of Negro origin, and, on the other hand, sensuous romantic jazz, folk songs from various parts of our country, such as cowboy songs (there are hundreds of them and they are purely American), songs of the Virginia mountains, songs and dance music of the many tribes we so erroneously call Indians. This 'Indian' music would be difficult (although not impossible) to pick up because it is an integral part of the religious life of our aboriginal Americans and is sacred to them."

Mr. Stokowski goes on to say: "We are in a significantly creative stage in the development of an American musical culture. Musically speaking, we have passed the central point in the depression and are on our way upward. As the country builds itself again into a new social and economic life, there is bound to be — and the process has begun — a new expression of the creative forces of American life in music."

Thus we may be sure that a program — whether classical or primitive — which reflects the social forces of the times, the spirit and life of the people, is on the right track. Any art form which divorces itself from the comprehension or enjoyment of the people is sure of extinction. The people have shown clearly enough that fine music, sincere in character, is assured of continued popularity, while some of the so-called "popular" music scarcely lasts a dozen performances.

## 3.

I have made a list of representative programs which in my opinion are good efforts toward the accomplishment of radio's possibilities.

Of the symphony orchestras commonly available there is first the *New York Philharmonic Orchestra* on Columbia, then the versatile Mr. Frank Black's *String Symphony*, available about twice weekly over the N. B. C. Mr. Black aims at variety, and his programs are largely built up of music infrequently if ever heard. For this reason his work is of special importance. His orchestra, while entirely made up of strings, is smooth and brilliant. For symphony music of a lighter character there is the *Ford Sunday Evening Hour*, including on each recital a well-known opera singer. Then, there is Howard Barlow's program, also with soloists, on Saturday evenings.

For choral music there have been two choirs performing during the summer — the *Chicago A Capella Choir* and the *Russian Symphonic Choir*. Both are widely known artistic groups.

Chamber music finds regular outlets in the *Walberg Brown String Ensemble* and

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# Modest Petrovitch Moussorgsky

## THE GREATEST OF RUSSIAN COMPOSERS

BY SASHA OSTROFSKY

**T**HE year 1935 abounds in musical jubilees. We have celebrated the 250th birthdays of Bach and Handel, but the commemoration of the centennial anniversary of Modeste Petrovich Moussorgsky still remains.

The greatest of Russian composers was born in Karevo, a small rural community in Northern Russia, on the twenty-eighth of March, 1835. Both his parents were very musical, and his mother, a good pianist, became his first teacher. The boy's gifts were unmistakable, but the family had military traditions, and he was sent to a school of "Ensigns" in St. Petersburg. Although he continued to take piano lessons, he was bent upon a military career. After graduating, Moussorgsky entered as a lieutenant into, what was then, one of the smartest regiments of the guards.

### *Meets the Famous Five*

In 1857 he met Dargomysky, and through him a group of young gifted composers. Balakirev, César Cui, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakoff were at that time amateurs like himself. They were intensely interested in the national life of Russia, and in their combined efforts against the Westerners, Rubinstein and Tchaikowsky, formed the famous "Five" — The New Russian School. Moussorgsky's interest in music receiving a new impetus, he began to study the scores of Beethoven, Glinka and others. Soon after that he resigned from his regiment, deciding to devote himself to composition.

His struggle with poverty began. This, together with a lack of recognition, discouraged him. He became a victim of a nervous depression, which injured his health. High strung, morbid and sensitive, he suffered tremendously. He, whom Borodin described as a "dashing, almost foppish guardsman," became slovenly in his

manner and attire. Never a teetotaler, he now frequently had recourse to alcohol and other stimulating drugs, in which he sought relief. It is thus we see him in Riepin's portrait. He died on the twenty-eighth of March, 1881, his forty-sixth birthday, in the Military Hospital of St. Petersburg, a broken and disappointed man, never having tasted the joy of recognition or success.

### *The Most Russian*

The list of Moussorgsky's works includes operas, choruses, songs, orchestral and piano compositions. In all his works he stands revealed as the most Russian of all the Russian composers. Because of this, he, like Gogol and Dostoyevsky, must remain for foreigners, to some extent, a closed book. In his music, the genius of the two writers is strangely combined. A humorist, he laughs like Gogol — through tears. A proof of the affinity of their geniuses is Moussorgsky's predilection for Gogol's texts. *The Fair of Sorochinsk* and the *Matchmaker*, although both left unfinished, contain many pages of great beauty and originality. The latter was an experiment, in what the composer called, an "opera dialogue," an attempt to set to music the prose text just as it stood. The difficulties were too many, and he completed only the first act.

Like Dostoyevsky, from the pages of whose novels Moussorgsky might easily have stepped down, he possesses the same mastery of character delineation, the same uncanny ability to dwell in the darkest corners of the human soul. Is not *Boris Godunow* the musical equivalent of *Crime and Punishment*?

An opera less known in this country than *Boris* is *Khovantchina*. Its libretto, like that of the former, is Moussorgsky's own. It is based upon the historic struggle be-

tween old and new Russia during the reign of Peter the Great, and has a complicated, typically Dostoyevskian plot. The music of *Khovantchina*, rugged and very dramatic in spirit, possesses many national characteristics. The only exception is the group of oriental dances: in the scene in which Prince Ivan is entertained by his Persian slaves. Borodin's *Polovetzian Dances*, the every popular *Scheherezade*, and later, the *Caucasian Sketches*, all date back to their common prototype—these *Persian Dances*.

### **The Realist in Art**

For Moussorgsky, his art was a "medium of intercourse with his fellow men." Honest and truthful in his personal life, he was in his art a realist, almost a "naturalist," always trying to make his music a tonal expression of the outer world, a true reflection of life. *Pictures at an Exhibition*, familiar to our audiences not in the original piano version, but in the orchestral arrangement of Ravel, was written by Moussorgsky after visiting an exhibition of drawings by his friend Hartmann. It is a set of ten short pieces, each representing a picture. For an introduction Moussorgsky chose a very Russian theme in 11-4 time—*The Promenade*. In it the composer portrays himself strolling about the gallery, pausing at pictures that attract his attention. M. D. Calvocaressi says there is "nothing more supple, undulating, evocative, than the sentences of this *Promenade*. Rhythmed ingeniously, sustained, persisting without monotony, thanks to the diversity of nuances." Space forbids a detailed description of all the *Pictures*. Suffice to say, that as a whole, *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a rare example of successful program music in its narrow sense. The nostalgia of *Il Vecchio Castello*, the poetic mood of *Bydlo*, the humor and pathos of *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*, the barbaric splendor of *The Great Gate of Kiev*, are all faithful musical descriptions of the originals.

Among the most interesting and original compositions of Moussorgsky, are his songs. With the exception of *The Flea*, popularized by Chaliapin, they are seldom heard anywhere outside of Russia. Two cycles, *The Nursery* and *Dances of*

*Death*, will serve as a good illustration of the songs' wide emotional range, and of their composer's power as a song writer.

In *The Nursery*, Moussorgsky paints "seven pictures" of that naive, distant, wistful and poetic period of our lives, which we call childhood. Liszt, who heard these songs, probably from Borodin, expressed great admiration for them and for their author.

The four songs, comprising *Dances of Death*, were written by Moussorgsky in the last period of his life. Here we see him in a new light. The realist now emerges as a poet of deep symbolism. *Trepak*, the first in series, represents Death overtaking a drunken peasant in the forest during a snow storm. Together they perform the man's last dance. The next is the *Lullaby*. The weary mother has fallen asleep. Death takes her place at the cradle and lulls the sick baby to its final sleep. In the *Serenade*, Death in the guise of a cavalier sings a serenade under the window of a sick girl. His embrace delivers her from her earthly sufferings. The last song is the *Field Marshal*. Here Death appears as a mighty chief reviewing the field of battle. Profound melancholy pervades the entire cycle. The instrumental part in the songs is beautiful and expressive. It constitutes their artistic essence. The vocal line is throughout very pure and there is a close relationship between the words and the music.

### **An Unappreciated Genius**

In an earlier issue, Mr. Reed called Tchaikowsky an everyman's musician. If this is true, then Moussorgsky is not, and never will be dear to the heart of the average music lover. During his lifetime the critics and the public misunderstood and abused him. His friends, composers like himself, appreciated his genius, but were too busy with their own work, to fully realize its extent. Even after his death Moussorgsky was abused. He left many compositions in an undeveloped, incomplete stage. Sometimes it was because of a certain technical helplessness, due no doubt, to his late start as a composer, but mainly on account of a super-abundance of ideas. Rimsky-Korsakoff, while orches-

trating and editing these works, subdued much that seemed to him too vivid or daring. It is true that he brought many of them into a more "performable" state, but by doing so he devitalized some of Moussorgsky's most inspiring pages and ideas. *Boris Godunow*, recognized as his masterpiece, is known to us only through such an edition. The original version, recently published in the Soviet Union, is considered "impracticable" for stage production. Like other works it may need the medium of records, to be done full justice.

In spite of all this, Moussorgsky's greatness is now acknowledged not only by musicians and critics, but by an ever-growing public. The new Russian composers owe him much. Primarily a nationalist, he is performed by all the leading orchestras in Europe and America. His importance as a composer on a world scale is further emphasized by the influence he had on the art of Debussy and Ravel.

In 1874, in a letter to Stasov upon the death of a deceased friend, Moussorgsky wrote: "This is how the wise usually console us blockheads, in such cases: 'He is no more, but what he has done lives and will live'. True . . . but how many men have the luck to be remembered?"

Moussorgsky has that luck.

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### Hot Jazz or Swing Music

(Continued from Page 198)

could never quite formulate with just the right words, crystallized into a simple lucid explanation of the essentials that differentiate hot jazz and dance music: intonation, melodic style, swing, and improvisations. In this chapter the Anti-Everything - Which - Is - Not - Straight - or - Classical will find a convincing discussion and explanation of the other side of the case.

Two entire chapters are devoted to a critical biographical study of the two greatest figures in the history of Hot Jazz — Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington. No two other men since the beginning of hot jazz (which it is generally agreed, began around 1900) have done more to develop and elevate the Hot Jazz form to

the level of perfection it attained between 1926 and the present day. The renowned Louis took jazz from the streets and dives, reshaped it, made order out of chaos, and thereby created an expressive music of a race. Ellington refined the music and the form and raised them to the level of an art form. He has made Hot Jazz the expression of a race and an age. The still mythical American music, when it attains the character that will make it distinctly American, such as we now know the Russian, Italian, and German characteristics, may some day trace its roots to these two great creators — Armstrong and Ellington.

The rest of Panassié's book is devoted to a discussion of the value of arrangements and arrangers in art which is mostly improvisatory; brief sketches of all the other well known artists in the Hot Jazz world, grouped according to the instruments they play, and with comments on their individual styles; a discussion of that ever-controversial subject — the Chicago style; and a review of the principal orchestras, including their personnels. The book ends with an unusual and valuable appendix — a remarkably complete list of red hot records from all over the world, with exhaustive footnotes on personnels, styles, and individual artists. Of course, European catalog numbers are quoted of the records issued there, but the American numbers can easily be traced in the American catalogs. This last feature is well worth imitating in all books on music — no matter what the music is — for the disc has now reached a level of importance equal to the concert hall.

M. Panassié has written a masterpiece of sound logic which defies refutation and he has assembled an amazing number of facts seasoned with his own remarkable knowledge of people and style. It is a book which should be read by all — but particularly by Americans. For this reason, it is unfortunate that the book is only available in French.

*Le Jazz Hot*, by Hugues Panassié, is published by R. A. Correa, 8, Rue Saint-Beuve, Paris VI<sup>e</sup>.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We have asked Mr. Archetti to translate some of the important chapters from this controversial book. They will appear in future issues of the magazine.)



# The Library Shelf

*Anthologies for the Amateur Singer and Pianist,  
and a brilliant book on Music's Decline*

**WALTZES FROM VIENNA.** Selected and edited by Albert Wier. Published by Harcourt, Brace and Company. Price \$2.50.

**LYRIC SONGS FROM GRAND OPERAS.** Selected and edited by Albert Wier. Published by Harcourt, Brace and Company. Price \$2.00.

**H**ERE we have two more books for the student and the amateur planned by Mr. Wier, that enterprising and knowing editor of musical anthologies.

The nostalgic and romantic qualities of the Viennese waltz have made it universally famous. The origin of the waltz is shrouded in mystery, but its popularity was probably first established in Vienna near the end of the 18th century. Johann Strauss, Sr. and Jr. are immediately thought of when we mention the Viennese waltz, for they were instrumental in heightening and broadening its purpose, but Josef Lanner was its original founder.

Mr. Wier plans his book chronologically. There are forty-nine waltzes from twenty composers. Schubert, Lanner, Strauss, Sr., Strauss, Jr., Zeller, Millocker, von Blon, Lehar, Oscar Straus — all the famous waltz-kings are here. The fact that Strauss, Sr.'s *Radetzky March* is included in a book of waltzes may be excused on the grounds that its *trio* is in waltz time — and then, of course, it is a justly famous piece. Strauss, Jr. is well represented — all the favorites: *The Blue Danube*, *Roses from the South*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, etc., there are seventeen of his waltzes in fact, included. Among more modern compositions — *The Merry Widow Waltz*, the *Waltzes from A Waltz Dream* and *Waves of the Danube* are also here. Altogether a notable collection.

Standard collections of arias from operas usually vary very little. Mr. Wier

has however varied his considerably in his first selections, which include more than a dozen old arias seldom found in a book of this kind. One selection, Purcell's *When I Am Laid In Earth* from his *Dido and Aeneas* (one of the most movingly beautiful laments ever penned) is included here in an operatic collection for the first time. Thirty-three composers are represented in this book. All the most important, familiar and widely loved compositions are included, arranged in keys easy for anyone's voice.

We can unhesitatingly recommend these books to anyone interested in having a library of familiar classics handy in the home. The younger generation will unquestionably enjoy and profit from them, to say nothing of the older.

—Paul Girard.

\* \* \* \*

**MUSIC HO!** (*A Study of Music in Decline*) by Constant Lambert. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Price \$3.75.

**C**ONSTANT LAMBERT'S *Music Ho!* is a brilliant book of pungent criticism and virtriotic commentation, written by a musician who, by common consent, is classified as a sophisticate in the degree of his aesthetic preferences. Mr. Lambert is a young man — an erudite and enthusiastic young man — who has evinced some interesting talent as a composer, (*Rio Grande* is no doubt his best known work) and equal facility as a critic of the arts, historian and polyglot; a man, in short, heir to wide learning and fine predilections. He is not content to restrict his critical frontiers only to the esoteric discussion of music and musicians, but draws data from the methods of modern sculpture, literature and poetry. He discusses



with equal clarity the trends of Gide, Joyce, Brancusi and Edith Sitwell as those of Duke Ellington, Glinka, Debussy, Satie, Sibelius and Bach. All these analogies are, of course, in order, for they succeed in adding weight to his arguments and confirm many of his conclusions. Since all art is essentially related (*vide* the methods of Seurat, Monet and Picasso in painting and the almost similar methods of Debussy and Stravinsky in music) it is, therefore, intrinsically valid to employ the aesthetic principles of one art as they resemble or apply to another.

The critical conclusions of Mr. Lambert are sharply presented, not without their degree of bias, however, but they are all replete with much that is sound and provocative. One would, we venture to say, disagree with certain things that Mr. Lambert says about particular composers, but none, we are sure, can deny him the grounds on which he states them. Take note, for example, of such a caustic yet absolutely correct estimate of Stravinsky's *La Sacre du Printemps*, "a work," writes Lambert in a long essay, "which was merely the logical outcome of a barbaric outlook applied to the technic of impressionism." Not all evaluations have the character of being so epigrammatic, although many of them are similarly terse and to the point.

There are a number of pages devoted to the analysis of Debussy's art. "We have no sense of modulation in Debussy's music," he says in part, "for the simple reason that he doesn't modulate, and we have no sense of modulation in Schoenberg's music because the work itself has become one vast modulation."

This statement may strike the reader as an intelligent quibble, a remark of no ponderous weight. But, with a bit of reflection, one will recognize the deep import of this lucid suggestion. It is difficult within the limits of this review to go into detail about the book, to analyze each chapter or sub-chapter. The entire book is a link of historical discussion, and one must peruse the book as a whole in order to get its essential value. The chapter on Sibelius is as important as the one on Jazz, the discussion of Stravinsky or De-

bussy or Milhaud is of equal critical significance.

A final word to those who may suspect that the book is difficult to read because of its apparent musical terminology. The book does not attempt to become a technical encyclopedia: it is written for the man in the concert hall, for the person who loves music and wants to understand it in an intelligent and rational manner. It is therefore a book for the musician as much as for the music-lover.

We can only end this review with one exhortation: *Music Ho!* is a must-be-read-book on your list.

—William Kozlenko.

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### Radio Programs . . . .

(Continued from Page 205)

the *Whitney Ensemble*. The *N. B. C. Music Guild* is probably the most artistic endeavor in this direction, presenting invariably excellent programs three or four days a week.

Margaret Dilling on the harp is a very fine performer over N. B. C.; and soloists such as Rudolph Bochco, violinist; Oswald Mazzuchi, cellist, and Alma Schirmer, pianist, are always welcome.

For smooth and intricate jazz Ray Noble and Paul Whiteman are unsurpassed, though we should occasionally like to hear Duke Ellington and other Negro orchestras which revel in pagan sensuousness and often become savagely inspired. Real primitive jazz is not given as much hearing as it deserves. The same applies to what Stokowski calls "Indian music" and the true folk music of this country.

We must remember that on the folk music of every nation is built its enduring monuments of musical culture. Without the folk songs and dances of their separate countries geniuses like Beethoven and Moussorgsky could not have brought forth some of their finest work. It is up to us, us Americans to discover that which is peculiarly our own and encourage it. Only thus can we someday produce great musical genius. And the instrument which can bring all things to all people is the radio. May its vision widen.

# Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in this Issue: A. P. DE WEESE, PAUL GIRARD, WILLIAM KOZLENKO,  
PHILIP MILLER, HORACE VAN NORMAN, PETER HUGH REED

## ORCHESTRAL

BACH: *Es ist vollbracht* (from *The Passion of Our Lord According to Saint John*) (transcribed by Stokowski), played by The Philadelphia Orchestra, direction of Leopold Stokowski. Victor disc, No. 8764, price \$2.00.

**B**ACK in the days when the *Friends of Music* used to function in New York, the *Saint John Passion* was a regular feature of the musical season. The work was considerably cut, of course, to bring it within the time limits; and the contralto soloist — Marion Telva, or Mme. Gahier — would sit through the whole performance, to contribute one solo near the end. But that solo was the emotional high-spot of the work — *Est ist vollbracht*. "It is finished. O comfort for weary souls . . . The Hero of Judah has conquered — it is finished!"

And now Dr. Stokowski, with his superb orchestra, and aided by the finest modern recording, brings us this aria in a new dress. His setting is commendably simple. The first part of the aria (originally a rather florid, but deeply expressive duet for the contralto and the *viola da gamba* obbligato) is given by the strings, then repeated by the brighter voices of the English horn and bassoon. The middle section — a real song of triumph — is, naturally, fuller; and the repeat is sung by the strings. The aria remains glorious music, and unmistakably Bach, but lacking the text and the setting, it becomes something less than the original conception. Though intensely moving still, it is no longer the climax of the tragedy of man. The performance is certainly far beyond any the *Friends* ever gave us, but it will be necessary to use the memory or the imagination to realize to the full the greatness of the music.

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Incidentally, this aria must not be confused with the bass solo of the same title, from *Cantata No. 159*, which, in Karl Alwin's adaptation, has been so beautifully recorded by Elisabeth Schumann. Still a third, and totally different *Est ist vollbracht* is to be found among Bach's contributions to Schemelli's *Gesangbuch*.

—P. M.

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BERLIOZ: *Beatrice and Benedict* — *Overture*; played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Hamilton Harty. Columbia disc, No. 68342D, price \$1.50.

**T**HERE seems to be no end of good overtures. Perhaps the freedom of form sets composers at their ease, and they can let themselves go in a manner impossible in the complicated symphony. This seems to have been true of Berlioz; for his overtures have a brightness and sparkle of which we should otherwise hardly believe him capable.

*Béatrice et Benedict* was an opera, produced at Baden-Baden in 1862. The story is taken from Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Aside from the *Overture*, the work contains a *Nocturne* for two voices (*Vous soupirez, Madame*) which has been much admired. The first audience seems to have taken kindly to the opera, but it has never established itself in the repertoire. Berlioz himself said that it was not for Paris: they would not understand it there. "This work," he tells us, "is difficult of performance — especially in the men's parts; but I think it is one of the most splendid and original I ever wrote. Unlike *Les Troyens*, its production entails no expense."

Whether or not the opera as a whole would bear revival, the *Overture* is most welcome. It is not new to recording; Polydor has a version by Julius Kopsch and the Berlin Philharmonic, now several years old. Sir Hamilton Harty (who seems particularly happy in Berlioz) and the London Philharmonic, seems to be enjoying the "skirmishes of wit" in which the score abounds; and the recording is particularly broad and expansive.

—P. M.

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**MAHLER:** *Symphony No. 2 in C Minor*; performed by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, Twin City Symphony Chorus and soloists, under direction of Eugene Ormandy. Victor set M256, eleven discs, price \$16.50.

**THIS** set was reviewed in the May issue of *The American Music Lover*. An article on *Gustav Mahler: The Man and the Composer* also appeared in that issue. Readers, who are interested, can obtain back copies by writing to us.

\* \* \* \*

**SIBELIUS:** *Second Symphony in D, Major Opus 43*; played by Boston Symphony Orchestra, direction Serge Koussevitzky. Victor set No. M 272, eleven parts, price \$11.00.

**SIBELIUS' *Second Symphony***, which dates from his thirty-seventh year, was written three years after his *First*, but its advancement in style and individuality suggests a greater length of time. Unlike the *First*, which is marked by a Russian influence, the *Second* is strikingly original in its message. Here, we have the Finnish giant speaking to us in accents that are by turns forceful and concise, brooding and melancholic, deeply stirring and strangely gaunt, triumphant and buoyant. Here is a message — strange perhaps to the ear that hears it for the first time — a message, however, which is unforgettable and one which speaks with renewed fervor and purpose upon each re-hearing. The emotional drama of this music — for drama undeniably it is — is not concerned with any program, although one has been

read into it. It is a drama instead of themes, of germs of themes: their play and interplay, and their development and construction into an organic whole. The genius of Sibelius is saliently evinced in the first movement, for — as Cecil Gray has said (and he, incidentally, has said almost the last word on Sibelius) — "Nothing in the entire literature of symphonic form is more remarkable than the way in which Sibelius here presents a handful of seemingly disconnected and meaningless scraps of melody, and then breathes life into them, bringing them into



SERGE KOUSSEVITZKY

organic relation with each other and causing them to grow in stature and significance with each successive appearance, like living things."

Sibelius has been acclaimed as the greatest symphonist since Beethoven. Curiously, his *Second Symphony* and Beethoven's *Second* mark a parallel point in the development of both composers. For, both men in their second symphonic works emancipate themselves from the influences of their immediate predecessors and both definitely establish the trend of

their new line. Too, both symphonies are the forerunners of two supreme masterpieces — Beethoven's *Eroica* and Sibelius' *Fourth Symphony*.

A new recording of Sibelius' *Second* should prove most welcome — particularly such a fervently conducted one — for, as we have stated above, it is more significant than his *First Symphony* and too because people who have become familiar with the newer and more vivid recordings of the past year will unquestionably want a major work by the Finnish giant so reproduced.

The composer, we are told, has applauded Koussevitzky's interpretation of his *Second Symphony*. And well he might, for it is doubtful if anyone realizes a more thrilling or imaginative reading. True, Koussevitzky extends the work — perhaps six minutes beyond the timing of the late Kajanus, who several years ago recorded the work at the composer's wish for Columbia — but his extension does not destroy in any way the composer's intentions; rather it might be said to clarify and even vivify them more than in part. This symphony is — as we have noted — a veritable drama, and it is in music of dramatic import that Koussevitzky excels; hence we mark him as an ideal interpreter of same.

Koussevitzky's concise — almost overly deliberate tempo — in the first movement definitely helps to establish the significance of the thematic material and its subsequent development. He also conveys most effectively the mystic opening of the second movement and in a like manner coordinates its unusually intensified dramatic conflict.

In the *scherzo*, the five drum beats prior to the first *trio* — which play a definite psychological part in both the spacing and the timing between the bustling energy of the *scherzo* proper and the poetic *interlude* that follows — are inadequately reproduced in the recording. We admit that they are marked *diminuendo*, but what is satisfactorily reproduced in the concert hall in this manner is not always likewise reproduced in recording. It would have been well to have lifted the volume here slightly. However, this remains a minor

point in an otherwise excellent recording of this symphony.

In the last movement Koussevitzky shows his love of and flare for the dramatic. Here, he takes material which is inherently banal in part and absurdly pompous at times and with rare musicianly skill and precision moulds it into a triumphantly dramatic peroration. The thrill of the music, and of a great orchestra in superb performance, make us forget any shortcomings in this finale. The last pages are magnificently realized both from an interpretive standpoint and a reproductive one.

—P. H. R.

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RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Caprice Espagnole*, Opus 34, played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, conducted by Arthur Fiedler. Two Victor records, No. 11827-28. Price \$3.00.

IT is conceded that this — together with *Scheherazade* — is Rimsky-Korsakoff's most colorful orchestral work. There is little, in the way of ornate effects, that the composer has refrained from utilizing in order to achieve a work of indubitable brilliance. Rimsky had intended to write, as he tells us in his Autobiography, "a virtuoso violin fantasy on Spanish themes." He must have been aware of the potentialities of the composition as an orchestral work, however, for he composed the *Caprice* instead of the sketches he made for the violin piece. "According to my plans," he says, "the *Capriccio* was to glitter with dazzling orchestral color, and, manifestly, I had not been wrong." We may add, emphatically, indeed not! "The opinion formed by both critics and the public," continues Rimsky, with some show of hurt pride, "that the *Capriccio* is a *magnificently orchestrated piece* — is wrong. The *Capriccio* is a brilliant *composition for orchestra*. The change of timbres, the felicitous choice of melodic designs and figuration patterns, exactly suiting each kind of instrument, brief virtuoso cadenzas for solo instruments, the rhythm of the percussion instruments, etc., constitute here the very *essence* of the composition, and not its garb or orchestration."

There are few masters in contemporary music who can vie with Rimsky-Korsakoff in his prodigal usage of tonal colors and instrumental effects. Indeed, he was one of those happy men in music who could depict in tone prismatic beauties similar to those employed by painters in their plastic art.

This rendition by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, under the direction of Arthur Fiedler, is an excellent one. Since this particular organization is but a seasonal one (playing only during the summer when the regular season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with Koussevitzky is at an end), we hope that they have had an opportunity to record other works of similar interest and appeal. The recording, like all the other recent "high fidelity" releases of this organization, is spacious and brilliant.

—W. K.

Our review of Eugene Ormandy's performance of Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony* (Victor set M274) has been unavoidably held over until next month.

—The Editor

**HONEGGER:** *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra*, played by Eunice Norton, pianist, and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction of Eugene Ormandy. Victor disc, No. 8765, price \$2.00.

**H**ONEGGER'S *Concertino* was composed in 1924, and performed in Paris, at one of Koussevitzky's concerts, in 1925. Andrée Vaurabourg (Mme. Honegger) was the soloist. America first heard it at Cincinnati, March 18, 1927, played by Walter Giesekeing, under Fritz Reiner's direction. When the Honeggers toured this country in 1929, the work was a feature of their programs.

The following analysis by Philip Hale will give an idea of the form of the composition. "The *Concertino* is in three enchainned sections, to be played without a pause. The first section, an *Allegro molto moderato*, is in the form of a dialogue for piano and orchestra. The piano, after a run, has a syncopated theme while the

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woodwind trills. After a little fugal passage — trumpet, bassoon, clarinet, flute, piccolo — there is a return to the opening dialogue. The second section, *Larghetto sostenuto*, has a melody for the piano with supporting strings. The orchestra embroiders and ornaments and woodwind instruments enter in a pastoral way. In the *Finale Allegro*, strings *col legno* (struck with the back of the bow) establish a rhythm. There are triplet runs for wind instruments. The piano has a syncopated dance — violas and bassoons indulge in a tune like a street song. After the final crescendo, the music diminishes in force. The movement abounds in strokes for the piano in the absence of any other percussion instrument."

The French critic, André George, has written of the humor and melancholic poetry of this music. The composer combines, he says, firmness, robustness and elegance. We do not feel, however, that there is anything of great importance here. There is little real urge in the writing, though a kind of sophisticated whimsy gives it a certain attractiveness.

Eunice Norton, the young pianist who makes her recording debut on this disc, is a native of Minneapolis, and a pupil of Matthay and Schnabel. After her first New York recital, the critics expressed surprise at such breadth and power in so youthful and small a person. This *Concertino* gives her an opportunity to show her technical prowess, and her rhythmic sense; but for ideas of the emotional side of her playing, we will have to wait for a further release. Needless to say, she is well supported by Ormandy and the Minneapolis Orchestra; and in this day of superlative recording, the reproduction meets the standard.

—P. M.

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MOZART: *Concerto No. 4, in D Major*, K. 218; played by Joseph Szigeti, violin, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia set 224, 3 discs, price \$4.50.

"HE gives his hearers no time to breathe: as soon as one beautiful idea is grasped, it is succeeded by another, which drives the first from the mind: and so it goes on, until the end; not one of

these beauties remains in the memory." So wrote Dittersdorf of the violin concertos of Mozart. True, there is no end of variety, and one effect follows fast upon another; but surely the distinguished composer's brain could not have been very retentive if he could forget the wealth of lovely melody contained in these works.

Though Mozart did not like to play the violin, it was among his duties at the Salzburg court to do so; and the five violin concertos which he wrote in 1775 were probably for his own use there. This one in D has not rivaled the A Major work in popularity, but it is certainly no less attractive. And Szigeti and Beecham in combination make this set an indispensable one for all lovers of the best in recorded music.

From the very first measure, Beecham's infectious rhythmic sense is apparent. An opening somewhat in the spirit of the first movement of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* leads up to the entrance of Szigeti, whose electrifying high tones establish a mood of happy excitement. The second theme is one of those superbly simple tunes which he have come to associate with the name of Mozart. The movement is full of problems set and solved with the joyousness of mastery, by Mozart, Szigeti and Beecham. Elaborate as the ornamentation is, this is no empty display; but the fulfillment of an impulse.

If any composer ever excelled in the writing of slow movements, his name was certainly Mozart. The *Andante cantabile* has the quality of Elysian calm. Perhaps the cadenza jars a little, but this is forgotten in the beauty of the postlude. The *Finale* is a sort of combination of *Zauberfloete* and *Così Fan Tutte*. In the form of a rondo, a theme resembling Papageno's *Ein Maedchen oder Weibchen* alternates with a more rapid section. There is also a little gavotte and musette, which give the violinist a chance for a bit of double-stopping.

Mozart is a common meeting ground for musicians of all tastes, and it can hardly be doubted that the appeal of these fine records will be universal. The only criticism we can offer is (as hinted above) that the cadenzas do not measure up to the



concerto. Joachim was, beyond question, a great musician; but inspiration was not upon him when he followed the time-honored tradition, and filled the gaps in this work. Of the two cadenzas, the one in the first movement is the less disappointing, as it is the more straightforward. That in the *Andante* is marred by a few sentimental and un-Mozartian chromatic touches.

Just before the electric revolution, this work was recorded by Fritz Kreisler, under the baton of Sir Landon Ronald. The records were considered to be among the best issued up to that time, and they pointed the way which the phonograph was to follow in the ensuing years. The present version may also be considered a landmark; and it is to be hoped that it will be followed by other interpretations of these two sterling artists.

—P. M.

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WIENIAWSKI: *Concerto No. 2, in D Minor, Op. 22*; played by Jascha Heifetz, violin, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of John Barbirolli. Victor set M-275, 3 discs, price \$6.50.

**A** CONCERTO by Wieniawski, dedicated to Sarasate, and played by Heifetz—display music with a capital “D”. However, this does not tell the whole story. Wieniawski deserves a little better at the hands of the critics than do most virtuoso-composers. With all his pyrotechnics, he did have a gift of melody, and that gift he lavished on this *Concerto*. The work can hardly be called musically important, but it is easy to listen to; and when played by a Heifetz one can occasionally forget its intrinsic thinness. Written for the purpose of parading the violinist’s stock in trade, it has much that music of this kind generally lacks. We have all been through the Liebestraum period, and to listeners in such a stage, this concerto will have a great appeal. All music is good which can lead us to something better.

Every young violinist must try his hand at Wieniawski; and these records may very well serve as a model. As a fiddler pure and simple, Heifetz has certainly no superior: and in recent seasons his art has

taken on a new warmth. He is, therefore, the ideal man to play this work. The famous lush second theme in the first movement (and heard again later) is treated with a restrained fervor which is quite convincing. The celebrated *Romance* can rarely have been so eloquently performed. In the *Finale*, of course, we meet again the old Heifetz, who has lost nothing of his brilliance. John Barbirolli and the ubiquitous *London Philharmonic Orchestra* support the soloist in fine style.

As a filler the artist gives us the same composer’s *Scherzo Tarantelle, Op. 16*, to the able piano accompaniment of Arpad Sandor. Here the musical value is less than in the *Concerto*, but not so the brilliance of the performance.

—P. M.

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## CHAMBER MUSIC

RACHMANINOFF: *Sonata in G Minor, Opus 19*, (for Cello and Piano); played by Marcel Hubert and Shura Cherkassky. Columbia Set No. 225, three discs, price \$4.50.

**T**HE cello might be termed the baritone of stringed instruments, although it can very satisfactorily ascend into the tenor range and even higher; but psychologically it tends — when it sings, even in its upper register — to give the impression of the middle masculine voice. Unquestionably, it lacks the tonal variety and the suppleness of the violin, but in the hands of a gifted player it can impress because of its added richness and emotional depth — even though the latter can prove monotonous when overstressed.

This sonata should prove a welcome addition to recorded music because Rachmaninoff has written expressively for both the cello and the piano. True — there are places where the virtuosity of the latter instrument (Rachmaninoff’s own), particularly in the development sections of the first and last movements, overtops and eclipses the stringed instrument — thus destroying the balance, but — on the whole — the work from the cellist’s standpoint is gratefully conceived and ingeniously written.

Rachmaninoff has been termed a classicist, but we are inclined to include him among the later day romanticists — whose tendencies inclined toward classicism. Inherently, he is the poet — the singer of melancholic sentiment—and it is in the expressive lines of the brooding bard that he impresses most in this work. There is no great depth to this sonata, it does not strive for example to reveal or solve any life-problem — for Rachmaninoff is neither sage nor prophet—but as music it is genuine and sincere in its emotional scope and purpose and for this reason enjoyable. One feels instinctively that the composer himself enjoyed creating it.

Marcel Hubert, who makes his recording debut with this set, is not as well known as many of his contemporary cellists, but it is safe to predict that this will not be for long; because his fine musicianship and tonal purity place him in the front rank of performers on this difficult instrument. One might have liked a varied range of tonal quality at times, or differentiation for example between the long songful melodies and the lesser lines, but the fact that Hubert eschews sentimentalism in a work which admittedly would allow it is a tribute to his sterling artistry. Cherkassky, the pianist — who is now touring the Orient, proves himself a competent and enthusiastic protagonist to M. Hubert. Our readers may be interested to know that these two artists have successfully performed this work in public.

The recording and the balance in this set are realistic and on the whole veritable.

—P. H. R.

\* \* \* \*

## PIANO

**BEETHOVEN:** *Sonata in C Sharp Minor (Moonlight)*; played by Wilhelm Bachaus. Victor discs 8735-6. Price \$4.00.

**ALTHOUGH** not heard at all during recent years in America, due to a regrettable series of personally unpleasant incidents attending his last visit here, Bachaus is unquestionably one of the master pianists of our time. An artist of bone and sinew, one who invariably invests

anything he tackles with a superb vitality and sweep, he has been already heard on records in some of the most formidable works of piano literature (the *Paganini-Brahms Variations*, the *Brahms D Minor Concerto*, as well as a great many of the Brahms piano pieces generally shunned by pianists as being unplayable, are cases in point). That he has acquitted himself creditably in whatever he has done is, we think, a matter of virtually unanimous agreement — at least, among musicians. He therefore seems a practically ideal choice for Victor's new "high fidelity" version of the *Moonlight*.

Bachaus has the power of a giant, but his evocation of the magic of the first movement is a miracle of poetic delicacy and the superb recording reveals with incredible realism his masterly subtlety of phrasing and pedalling. The titanic last movement, however, is played with fingers of steel, and the performance as a whole must take rank as one of the most thoroughly satisfying expositions of a Beethoven *sonata* within recent years. It is well to be reminded now and again that there are other Beethoven exponents of the first rank beside Artur Schnabel, epochal as his series of *sonata* and *concerto* recordings have been. The much less publicized Bachaus here demonstrates his fitness to be accorded equal rating as a Beethoven interpreter.

—H. V. N.

\* \* \* \*

**DONOVAN:** *Suite for Piano — Prelude, Air and Jig*; played by Edwin Gerschewski, and *Two Songs* with String Quartet — *On Her Dancing and Farra Diddle Dino*; sung by Grace Donovan. New Quarterly Recording, price \$2.00.

**RICHARD** Donovan, Assistant Dean of Music at Yale Music School, writes with conviction, although what he has to say is none too imposing. His music is harmonically acidulous and conflicting. His *Suite for Piano* proves to be an *Air* with a short *Introduction* and a wholly irrelevant tail-piece. The *Air* is ingeniously conceived and likewise worked out, but is all too short to establish itself consequen-

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.....My heart at thy sweet voice  
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Trovatore, Il.....Fierce flames  
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Villi, Le.....Forget-me-nots  
Walkure, Die.....  
.....Sigmund's love song  
Xerxes.....Ne'er could there be  
.....and  
Scarlatti.....  
Ahl! If thou wouldst cease to  
wound  
Pergolese.....Nina  
Lotti.....Pur Dicasti  
Tenaglia.....Take pity, sweet eyes

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tially. His songs also are clever, although difficult and none too kind to the singer—who, in this case, sings well but enunciates poorly.

—P. G.

\* \* \* \*

SCHUMANN: *Toccata in C Major, Op. 7*; and *Fruehlingsnacht* (transcribed by Liszt); played by Josef Lhévinne, pianist. Victor disc, No. 8766, price \$2.00.

**T**HIS disc marks the return of Josef Lhévinne, the distinguished pianist, whose teaching activities at the Juilliard School of Music have reduced the number of his concert appearances of late. His recording work, oddly enough, has been confined to one release — *The Blue Danube Waltz*. An artist who combines delicacy and power, he has here chosen a work calculated to show his technical equipment.

The *Toccata in C* was written in 1830, revised in 1833, and published in 1834. Schumann himself described it as “a big study in double notes for the brothers to practise;” and elsewhere “perhaps one of the most difficult of pianoforte pieces.” According to Xavier Schwarenska it is “one of the most wonderful of technical tasks, and was well-nigh enigmatical at the time of its origin; but it is, withal, music of spirit, splendor and stature.” Somewhat akin in general style to the *Etudes* of Chopin, it is healthy music with no special message. It is made or broken by the interpreter—and, conversely, he is made or broken by it. Mr. Lhévinne, of course, emerges triumphant, but the listener is permitted to forget that Schumann was essentially a poetic composer.

The *Toccata* takes a little less than a side and a half; and the remaining grooves are given over to Liszt's transcription of the lovely Schumann song, *Fruehlingsnacht*. The original shows us the Schumann we miss in the *Toccata*. It is, to be sure, a more mature work, though it is full of youthful ardour. A lover wanders in the garden; hears the birds returning from the South; sees the plants beginning to shoot. The moon and the stars seem to speak to him, and the trees murmur dreamily; the nightingale cries out to him “She is thine!” It is all over almost before it

begins — and ecstatic little miniature with a pulsating piano part.

But what has Liszt done? Elaborated, extended, repeated, sentimentalized. The charm of the song is completely lost in his distortions. And if any singer were to stretch the melody as unmercifully as it is stretched here — in the genuine Liszt tradition — he would certainly be given the gong.

By all means let us hear more from Mr. Lhévinne; but let him give us music which will show the subtler side of his artistry.

—P. M.

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## VOCAL

BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio* — *Quartets from Acts I and II*; sung by Erna Berger, Henriette Gottlieb, Marcel Wittrisch, W. Domgraf-Fassbaender, and W. Grossman, with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, directed by Fritz Zweib. Imported Victor disc, No. 11826, price \$1.50.

**T**HE Act I Quartet, *Mir ist so wunderbar*, depicts the scene where Marzelline, to her father Rocco's delight is falling in love with Leonora, disguised as a man, thereby making her admirer Jaquino despair. All of these conflicting emotional currents the art of Beethoven succeeds in expressing in a tranquil, balanced free fugue.

The Act II *Quartet* is in vivid contrast, as it shows the titan Beethoven in full control of the climax of a fiery melodramatic scene. Don Pizarro is ready to murder Florestan, when *Fidelio* reveals herself as the latter's wife; Pizarro angrily decides to kill them both when the distant trumpets announce the arrival of the Governor, thus giving them their freedom. Several lines of spoken dialogue relieve the tension of the passionate outbursts of the music.

The artists in these quartets are established Central European singers accustomed to giving carefully rehearsed ensemble performances. Their conscientious work and fitness for the task make this a completely satisfactory record. The disc

is already several years old, but the recording is not below that of the present time. Any collector of records of serious musical importance will welcome this importation.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

**BRAHMS:** *Wiegenlied, Treue Liebe, Botschaft*; and **REGER:** *Maria Wiegenlied*, sung by Ria Ginster, with piano accompaniments by Gerald Moore. Imported Victor disc, No. 8763, price \$2.00.

**RIA GINSTER** is a soprano whom America will first hear personally this coming season. She has established an anticipating interest by her recent admirable recordings of some of the great Mozartean arias, songs in a recent *Hugo Wolf Society Album*, and a disc of Schumann songs.

All four of the songs on this record are to be found in the English H. M. V. catalogue, but on two records with other additional songs. They make a happy foursome here. Mme. Ginster's bright voice is seldom warmly mellow, and yet she is able to make both the Brahms and Reger cradle songs uncommonly tender, and the high pianissimo phrase in the Reger song has an unforgettable haunting loveliness. The Brahms' *Cradle Song* is so familiar that most of us accept it without much thought. Brahms wrote it to celebrate the birth of the second son of his old friend, Frau Bertha Faber of Vienna. To the words of an old fifteenth century poem, he gave a melody in which, unusual in a cradle-song, almost every phrase has an upward flow, and an accompaniment based on an old waltz that Frau Faber had long before sung to him in Hamburg. The song originally had but one verse. *Treue Liebe*, although an early composition, is a fully mature song. The words, by Ferrand (pseud. of Eduard Schulz), in ballad form depict a woman waiting by the sea-side for her lover who does not return. As Friedlaender points out in his book on Brahms' songs, every detail in the words is brought out in the music, and we are made to feel the movement of the waves as they quietly advance.

*Botschaft* was composed in 1868 as a setting to Daumer's adaptation of a poem

by the great Persian poet Hafiz, and it won an instantaneous popularity. A doubtful lover asks the breeze to seek out his mistress and to report to him if he is in her thoughts. The song is patently a man's song, and yet Ginster's solid column of tone and extraordinary exuberance of feeling do it abundant justice. Gerald Moore's masterful piano accompaniment of the important and characteristically Brahmsian piano half of the song demand praise. The recording is flawless.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

**HARRIS:** *A Song For Occupations — Cantata for Eight-Part Chorus of mixed voices*; sung by Westminster Choir of Princeton, direction Dr. John Finlay Williamson. Columbia set 226, two discs, price \$3.00.

**ROY Harris** has chosen some difficult but expressive words from Walt Whitman for this work (difficult in the sense that they demanded and exacted much from a composer) and created a strong and vital score of an unusual order — a score rhythmically vigorous and sonorously bold. The opening section of the work is emotionally compelling, and the second section — while recalling Vaughan-Williams' *On Wenlock Edge* in part — is nonetheless individual in expression. There is a stern beauty here, a homespun quality, an earth earthiness, that Whitman has conveyed in words and Harris in music. The jargon of words that follow — typical of Whitman — imposed a difficult task upon the composer, one which it must be admitted he met and conquered with pulsating rhythms and stirring sonorities that are both powerful and compelling.

The Westminster Choir, under Dr. Williamson give a credible performance of this modern *Cantata*, which incidently was written for them. The work imposes greatly on the sopranos, and since it is none too gratefully conceived for the high voices, and since much depends on the sopranos — particularly in the latter half of the score — it must be admitted that the first half comes off best in the recording. Of the four soloists heard in the



performance, only one — John Baumgartner, the bass, sings with the required conviction. The recording of this work — a wide-range one — is amazingly life-like.

—P. H. R.

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PERGOLESI: *Se tu m'ami*, and MARTINI: *Plaisir d'Amour*, sung by Jessica Dragonette, with the Renaissance Quintet. Ten-inch Columbia disc No. 4109-M, price \$1.00.

**E**XCEPT for *Nina*, the songs of the early eighteenth century Italian composer Pergolesi are pretty generally ignored. *Se tu m'ami* has been recorded by Spani and Guglielmetti, but Miss Dragonette's version is the first easily available to American buyers. In its mood of playfulness, its freshness and spontaneity it is typical of its time, and yet welcome to us. Miss Dragonette obviously sings it *con amore*, with an archness and deftness that make it a delight to hear.

*Plaisir d'Amour* has been recorded countless times before, and is constantly sung by the best singers. Miss Dragonette does not choose to sing it in the traditional classical manner of unaffected simplicity. Her rhythm is unsteady, and her frequent prolonging of a phrase seems more a mannerism than a legitimate effect.

The *Renaissance Quintet*, made up of a harpsichord, pardessus de viole, viole d'amour, viole de gambe, and basse de viole, renders delicate and flowing accompaniments that are tonally ideal for such songs. The recording is not better than average.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

*Descends sur ma Gondole*, and *Tu Souris*; sung by Tino Rossi. Columbia disc No. 4110-M, price \$1.00.

**T**HE first side has one of Pierre Vélone's songs from the French film *Casanova*; the reverse, a vocal tango of Francois-Bixio, with sustained tango rhythm. The singer has an agreeable well-

schooled voice, remarkably distinct enunciation, and an ingratiating simplicity of style. The accompanying orchestra plays smoothly. The recording is excellent. The record should please all who appreciate the better type of popular music with a Continental flavor.

—A. P. D.

\* \* \* \*

**T**HIS month Mlle. Boyer sings two charming love-songs that were not in her *Continental Varieties* repertoire here last winter. In the first, a Delettre song, with Lucien Hubert at the piano, the singer admits that she has played with fire and accepts the responsibility for a love affair that has become serious. The second, *Son Regard*, with Iza Volpin's Orchestra, has very much the same sentimental content—no matter how much she may wish her freedom, the singer knows that one glance from her lover will bring her back to him. A disc such as this easily explains why Mlle. Boyer can sell more than six hundred thousand records each year.

—A. P. D.

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## NOVELTY

KETELBEY: *In a Monastery Garden*; and OPENSHAW: *Love Sends a Little Gift of Roses*, played by H. Lennington Shewell on the Theremin, with organ and piano accompaniment. Imported ten-inch Victor disc, No. 25130, price 75c.

**T**HEREMIN'S electrical instrument has not yet become widely used, and is still somewhat of a novelty. It has on this disc a tone resembling the solo 'cello, and to the hands of Mr. Shewell, an exact intonation and a flexibility for the molding of a phrase. The tone blends well with the fine concert organ and piano used for the accompaniment. The unnamed organist and pianist deserve commendation for their restrained and tasteful work. The recording is good, and both of these old popular favorites get their full due on this record.

—A. P. D.



## HUGO WOLF SOCIETY VOLUME V.

### *An Announcement*

According to announcement received from Mr. Walter Legge of HMV, the fifth volume of the Wolf Society will contain a "larger proportion than any of its predecessors of known but unrecorded songs." A partial list of contents includes *Auf dem gruenen Balkon* and *Treibe nur mit lieben Spott* (Spanisches Liederbuch), *Der Soldat II*, *Der Musikant*, and *Der Schreckenberger* (Eichaendorff), *An die Geliebte*, *Auf ein alte Bild*, and *Gebet* (Moerike), A Goethe song, *Cophtisches Lied I*, and a Keller song, *Wie glaenzt der helle Mond*. The remainder of the contents will be taken from the Spanish and Moerike songs. The singers will be Rethberg, Ginster, Huesch, Kipnis, and Jansen; the pianists, C. V. Bos and Gerald Moore.

A postscript refers to inquiries about the recording of some Wolf songs reported to have been newly found this summer in Vienna. It ends by saying, "Wolf himself

did not approve of them, and he was a good judge of a song." It is understood that Mr. Legge made a special trip to Vienna to investigate the songs.

## CORRESPONDENCE

October 21, 1935.

To the Editor,  
Dear Mr. Reed:

As a reader of your very interesting and helpful publication, *The American Music Lover*, I beg permission to take issue with you in regard to your recent article entitled "Edward Elgar, an English Enigma."

While I agree with much that you say, I cannot help feeling that on the whole you seriously underestimate Elgar's music. Your article, while not unkind, was rather unsympathetic and a disappointment to me after your splendid surveys of Delius, Mahler and others.

Although I do not attempt to set myself up as a critic, I can speak from the listener's standpoint. I have a fairly good collection of records, including about fifty records of Elgar's music, and I say without hesitation, that I enjoy listening to the music of Elgar as much as I do that of any other composer.

I agree with you in your article when you make the statement that it is misleading to com-



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You will want this symphony for several reasons. In the first place it is stirring music . . . its entire score is eloquent with the composer's message. Add to this the fact that when Koussevitzky conducted it at the Sibelius Festival at Helsingfors, the composer himself was present and warmly praised the interpretation. And when you consider that now you can hear it

exactly as it is intended, on records that are unbelievably real, you have an irresistible combination. The Sibelius D MAJOR SYMPHONY is available on Victor Higher Fidelity records (Nos. 8721-8726-S in manual arrangement, and Nos. 8727-8732-S for automatic) in Album M-272. The price is \$11.00.



pare Elgar with Brahms. When Elgar is played like Elgar, he sounds no more like Brahms than Sibelius sounds like Tchaikowsky. I disagree with you when you say that the lack of interest in Elgar's music in this country may be due to its essential British temperament. I believe that if Elgar's music were played oftener by our great conductors (and with more understanding) an appreciation of his music would gradually develop. The greatest difficulty in popularizing Elgar is the fact that his music is so very deep. One hearing reveals nothing to the average listener. His *First Symphony*, for instance, has to be heard eight or ten times before its wealth of detail and message can be appreciated.

Finally, I do not believe that on the whole, any composer's music shows greater emotional feeling or greater nobility than does that of Elgar. If anyone doubts this I ask him to listen to the *Dream Children* and the *Kingdom Prelude*, to mention only two examples.

I am looking forward to the article which you promised us dealing with the Elgar recordings. Also, I wish to say again that I like your magazine very much and I find the articles interesting, and the record write-ups very valuable.

BENJAMIN JONES.

Montgomery, Alabama.

October 21, 1935.

To the Editor.

Dear Mr. Reed:

I cannot resist the opportunity to reply to Mr. Mathews' criticism anent my review of Casella's arrangement of the *Trio* from Bach's *Musical Offering*. Mr. Mathews states that my evaluation of this piece "does not coincide with any other review that I have seen in print. In England, Casella's arrangement was praised by practically every leading magazine and newspaper record critic." Now, Mr. Mathews has every right in the world to believe, if he likes, that a collective opinion in regard to a certain work makes that work well nigh perfect. I think a better and safer criterion for that writer — (and for the critics perhaps) would be for him to study the score itself and, in this specific instance, to note what Casella has done to it. I would supplement my first review and say that Casella has not only destroyed the texture of the original work by his arbitrary substitution of one instrument for another, but his tempi (particularly in the first *Allegro* which, in his version, becomes *Allegro molto*, and in the final *Allegro* which, strangely enough becomes a *Presto*) are so distorted that the thematic statements of the violin and cello are completely lost. Moreover, it is difficult to pass over in silence Mr. Casella's rather impolite manner of assuming the role of a piano soloist in a chamber music ensemble.

In reference to Mr. Mathews' statement that "Bach, had he lived longer, might have rearranged this music in this way himself," it begs the question. I am inclined to believe that Bach was sufficiently versed as a musician to know what tonal coloring he wanted when he specified

certain instruments in the score, particularly when these instruments are not obsolete, and are very much in use today.

Sincerely yours,

WILLIAM KOZLENKO.

New York, N. Y.

October 26, 1935.

To the Editor.

Dear Mr. Reed:

I was glad for the occasion to read the latest two issues of your magazine and wish to express my appreciation for your interesting article on Elgar. We in the hinterland of music, have so little opportunity to listen to Elgar's music, or to any good music for that matter, and we are fortunate if we can hear it on records or on the radio, on rare occasions.

I was particularly interested in Mr. Emil V. Benedict's article on recent recordings. It was lucidly written and giving a well tempered review of works which must be of interest to music lovers.

With my good wishes for your success,

Very truly yours,

M. M. GOLDMAN.

Kansas City, Missouri.

October 19, 1935

To the Editor.

Dear Sir:—

Let me commend you on the way you have fitted your little magazine into the picture of the modern home. I am glad to see you boosting participation in music by reviewing music collections, etc. The Harcourt-Brace series are particularly worthwhile. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

L. A. H. SITRUCK.

San Francisco, Cal.

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# In the Popular Vein

By Van

## VOCAL

AAAA—*No Strings*, from *Top Hat*, and *Er'ry Now and Then*. Ramona and Her Gang. Victor 25138.

This is the sort of thing that the inimitable Ramona does best, particularly the jaunty *No Strings*, which this grand songstress puts across in irresistible fashion, with the quite priceless assistance of a small and extremely select group from Whiteman's band, of which the brothers Teagarden are the most conspicuous feature. Not only is Ramona's vocalism up to par, but both sides are agreeably plentiful in her thoroughly individual and somewhat underrated piano playing.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Red Sails In the Sunset*, and *Roll Along, Prairie Moon*, sung by Al Bowlly. Victor 25142.

*Red Sails* is from the pen of Will Grosz, that German refugee now living in England who gave us *Isle of Capri*, although, for reasons best known to himself and his publishers, his name appears in the strangely altered form of Hugh Williams. It is a pleasantly undistinguished tune which Al Bowlly sings in his unfailingly effective style, with a discreet and tasteful accompaniment by Ray Noble. *Roll Along, Prairie Moon*, on the reverse, should make Songwriter Billy Hill either very proud or very angry since it is lifted from two of his most successful songs, *Old Spinning Wheel* and *Put On An Old Pair of Shoes*, without being anywhere as good as either. Al does what he can with it, which isn't much.

\* \* \* \*

## BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*Here's to Romance*, and *Midnight in Paris*. Enric Madriguera and his Orchestra. Victor 25154.

It is a rousing tune that Con Conrad has written for the new Nino Martini film *Midnight in Paris*, and Madriguera does a scintillating job on it, availing himself freely of those cunning instrumental devices which have distinguished his best work during the past six months. He chooses to play it as a rumba, although it is a *paso doble* in the picture, but it is enormously effective in his treatment, and more than atones for the rather insipid *Here's to Romance* on the other side.

AAAA—*New O'leans*, and *Sugar Plum*, both from *Thanks a Million*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25150.

AAA—*Thanks a Million*, and *I'm Sittin' High On a Hilltop*, both from *Thanks a Million*. Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25151.

The current Twentieth Century film, *Thanks a Million*, which features, among other luminaries, Whiteman and his band, boasts a quartet



ENRIC MADRIGUERA

of spunky Gus Kahn-Arthur Johnston tunes, all heard here in authoritative Whiteman versions. If ever a song was made to order for the peculiar talents of songstress Ramona, *New O'leans* is surely the one, and her projection of the number here is something to remember, not forgetting her excellent and entirely distinctive ivory-tickling, nor Frankie Trumbauer's opening alto sax chorus. *Sugar Plum* is a frolicsome affair which gives some of the more talented members of Paul's menagerie a chance to play around with hot choruses, including, happily, Jack Teagarden, No. 1 trombonist of the land.

AAA—*Rhythm and Romance*, and *Red Sails In the Sunset*. Lud Gluskin and his Continental Orchestra. Brunswick 7535.

Decidedly one of the better air bandmen is Lud Gluskin and his only too occasional discs are invariably colorful and distinctive, with arrangements far above the average in musicianship and ingenuity, and with performances of spirit. These two tunes, while none too exceptional in themselves, are more than satisfactorily handled by Gluskin, with *Rhythm and Romance* being particularly noteworthy for its fleet-footed grace and sparkle.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—*Now You've Got Me Doing It*, and *In the Dark*. Freddy Martin and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7537.

Among the younger songwriters, the team of Johnny Burke and Harold Spina is outstanding for its ingenuity, fecundity and general all-around conception of what constitutes a good song. One of their more recent emanations is *Now You've Got Me Doing It*, and it's a tune that's likely to grow on you, in common with nearly everything they turn out. Martin's performance is suave and effective, in the same style that he has been using for several years.

\* \* \* \*

AA—*On Treasure Island*, and *Take Me Back to My Boots and Saddles*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25144.

*On Treasure Island* is one of those sappy affairs which are so terrifyingly bad that it is actual physical distress to have to listen to them, while *Boots and Saddles* is just another "covered wagon" thing which Dorsey has garnished up with liberal quotations from the *On the Trail* movement from *Grand Canyon*. This will be all right until Grofe's publisher hears about it. Very unfortunate selections for the recording debut of this grand band.

## HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*Blues in E Flat*, and *Bughouse*. Red Norvo and his Swing Octet. Columbia 3079-D.

*Blues in E Flat* is the product of one of those impromptu jam sessions when no one has more than the faintest notion of what he is going to play two minutes before the recording takes place. Without recourse to music, the boys simply improvise on harmonies more or less tacitly agreed upon in advance, and the results, when the musicians are first-rate, are often miraculous. Goodman's *Texas Tea Party* was such a record, and this is an even better example. Here is jazz in its purest possible form, with all the improvisatory skill of the madrigalists revived in the year 1935. The work of each member of

the group is so grand that it is an injustice to single out any one of them for individual praise, but the work of "Chew" Barry and of Norvo himself seemed extraordinarily good, even when judged by their own high standards.

\* \* \* \*

AAAA—*Blue Skies*, and *Dear Old Southland*. Benny Goodman and his Orchestra. Victor 25136.

More magnificent work from Goodman's superb outfit. With the incalculable benefit of arrangements by Fletcher Henderson which are quite perfect examples of what hot arrangements can be when genius is wedded to impeccable good taste. Goodman plays them flawlessly, avoiding the excesses of the colored bands, yet infusing them with a rhythmic vitality which sets his work entirely apart from that of any other group in America.

\* \* \* \*

AAAA—*Jingle Bells*, by Benny Goodman and his Orchestra, and *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town*, by Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Victor 25145.

These two juvenile jingles would seem to be as unpromising material as ever faced a hot arranger, but it is understood that a really talented band could go to town with a fox-trotted *Rock of Ages*, so these turn out amazingly well. Of Goodman's contribution, it is hardly necessary to say more than it is easily up to his standard, while Dorsey does a tremendously exciting job on the reverse, with ensemble playing in the groove and "just right" solos, Tommy's own masterly trombone work being particularly relishable.

\* \* \* \*

AAA—I'm *Painting the Town Red*, and *Sweet Lorraine*. Teddy Wilson and his Orchestra. Brunswick 7520.

Any record which is blessed with the piano playing of Teddy Wilson automatically rates inclusion in any list of the month's outstanding discs by virtue of that fact alone. This one has plenty of Wilson's phenomenally skillful pianistics and, as in his previous discs with this combination, the vocals of Miss Billie Holliday, a new songstress out of Harlem, reveal an uncommonly intriguing personality and vocal method.

\* \* \* \*

AA—*Solitude*, and *How'm I Doin'?* Louis Prima and his New Orleans Gang. Brunswick 7531.

What Prima and his vandals do to Ellington's tenderly nostalgic *Solitude* here is just too awful for words. Try to laugh it off if you can and get yourself in the proper mood for the reverse, which is admirably geared to Prima's decidedly disorderly talent. Musically, Prima's work is unspeakable, but if approached in the spirit of good, clean fun, he is undeniably diverting.

# Radio Highlights

Music listeners will have an opportunity to hear a symphony orchestra in rehearsal on Thursday, November 7, during a special workshop program presenting the noted Cleveland Symphony Orchestra while rehearsing for one of its subscription concerts. The broadcast will take place from 11:30 to 12:00 noon over an NBC-WEAF network.

The Saturday evening broadcasts of the Boston Symphony will be heard on only three of the five Saturdays in November, since the orchestra plays in Carnegie Hall, New York, on the 23rd and the 30th. Following the all-Saint-Saens program on November 2, the Boston Symphony will play the following programs:

November 9—Richard Burgen, conducting; *First Symphony* by Shostakovich; Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto*, Josef Szigeti, soloist.

November 16—Serge Koussevitzky conducting; Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, with Jeannette Vreeland, Elisabeth Wisor, Paul Althouse and Julius Huehn, soloists.

An innovation in the now-perennial NBC Music Guild concerts is a series of programs featuring the noted musical authority and composer, Dr. Daniel Gregory Mason, as commentator and pianist. These programs, which will be introduced from time to time, will stress the human side of the great composers. Dr. Mason will be heard on four Thursdays in November. He is going to treat the following composers: Nov. 7, Schubert; Nov. 14, Chopin; Nov. 21, Mendelssohn; Nov. 28, Schumann. The opening program includes a group of nine Schubert songs, sung by Boris Saslawsky, and two *Moments Musicaux*.

The following Music Guild programs will be heard during November:

Tuesday, November 5—The Pasarella Trio, playing a *Sonata a Tre* by Bach-Stradella; and the *Trio Opus 2 Number 3 in C Minor* by Beethoven.

Wednesday, November 6—Isidor Philipp, pianist, and Pierre Fournier, cellist, playing the *Sonata, Op. 32*, by Saint-Saens.

On three Mondays, November 11, 18 and 25, the Musical Art Quartet will be heard, and on three Tuesdays, November 12, 19 and 26, the NBC String Quartet will be heard. Their programs have not been announced.

It is a pleasant innovation to find a series of chamber music concerts scheduled at an evening hour. The series is that of the New York Chamber Music Society, founded in 1914 by Carolyn Beebe, and a yearly contributor to New York City's musical fare. As in its regular New York

recitals, the Society during its broadcasts is specializing in music composed for unusual combinations of instruments. Its final three programs are as follows:

Friday, November 8—*Quintet in E Flat Major, Opus 16*, for piano, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, by Beethoven; *Deux Pieces en Forme Canonique*, for oboe, bassoon, two violins, viola, cello and bass viol, by Dubois; *Quintet in F Major*, for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, by Blumer; *Suite Antique*, for two solo violins and chamber ensemble of eleven, by Albert Stoesel, Mr. and Mrs. Stoesel, soloists.

Friday, November 15—*Octet in F, Opus 166*, by Franz Schubert.

Friday, November 22—*Divertimento for oboe, two horns and string quartet*, by Mozart (K11); *Two poems for chamber ensemble* by Griffes; *Scherzo in C Minor for flute, clarinet and ensemble of nine* by Gustave Langenus; *Kammersymphonie, Opus 27*, by Paul Juon.

The Music Appreciation Hour continues each Friday morning with Walter Damrosch as the genial master of ceremonies. The programs for November include the following:

November 8—*Three Bach fugues*; Four works by Handel; *Organ Concerto No. 2*, Recitative and Air, *Total Eclipse*, from *Samson*, Variations, *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, and *How Excellent Thy Name*, from Saul.

November 15—Excerpt from *Capriccio Espagnol* by Rimsky-Korsakov, *Largo* by Handel, *Fugue from Concerto Grosso No. 1*, by Handel, *The Bird House* by Saint-Saens, *Finale from Piano Concerto in C Minor* by Saint-Saens, Excerpt from Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, *Merry-Go-Round* by Powell, *Dance of the Apprentices* by Wagner.

November 22—*Adagio in C* by Bach, *Minuet* from Haydn's *Military Symphony*, *Scherzo* from Beethoven's *Third Symphony*, Haydn's *Symphony in B Flat*.

November 29—No concert.

The weekly program "Music Is My Hobby" continues to prove that the world of business is full of fine amateur musicians. This program is devised and arranged by NBC's Walter Koons. During the next few weeks, the following amateur performers will be heard:

November 7—Oliver S. Rogers, flutist, composer, and statistician for the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

November 14—A male quartet of four New York businessmen, formerly of the Yale Glee Club.

November 21—Mrs. Lionello Perera, violinist, wife of the prominent Italian banker.



November 28—Parker Bailey, composer, pianist, and New York attorney.

December 5—Lewis J. Fink, violinist and writer of life insurance.

To promote a more widespread appreciation of opera and operatic music, the Columbia Broadcasting System, in cooperation with the Juilliard School of Music in New York City, will offer a new series of twenty programs entitled "Understanding Opera," featuring noted guest artists and the symphony orchestra under Howard Barlow. The first program will be broadcast over the nationwide WABC-Columbia network on Tuesday, November 5, from 6:35 to 7:00 P. M., EST. The "Understanding Opera" series is an extension and elaboration of the "Understanding Music" broadcasts which last year won wide response.

The first operatic program, on November 5, will present two promising young singers, John Gurney, basso, and Bruna Castagna, contralto, in outstanding selections from three great operas. The first program is designed to illustrate current tastes in opera. The three music dramas represented have held the stage for years and proved their almost universal popularity. Gurney will sing two famous arias, the *Calf of Gold*, and Mephistopheles' *Serenade* from Gounod's *Faust*, while Miss Castagna will offer the brilliant *Habanera* from Bizet's *Carmen*. The orchestra will present the colorful *Prelude* to Wagner's opera *Lohengrin*, and Barlow will discuss all four selections informally.

Both young singers to be presented on this occasion have appeared with the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company and have been heard in many concerts at the Lewisohn Stadium and the Hippodrome in New York.

All of the programs to be offered in this series have been prepared by Columbia in cooperation with a distinguished committee from the Juilliard School of Music, consisting of Ernest Hutcheson, eminent pianist and Dean of the Juilliard School; Olga Samaroff Stokowski, pianist and member of the Juilliard faculty, and Albert Stoessel, head of the school's orchestra department.

Columbia's announcement said that "Understanding Opera" is presented as a direct result of an increasing interest in operatic and classical music throughout the United States. The series will seek to stimulate that interest and to direct it into channels which will afford greater enjoyment of operatic music for the average radio listener. The programs are planned for adults, and many of them for children and young people as well. Every program will feature outstanding soloists and choruses with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra directed by Barlow. Ernest Hutcheson described the purpose of the series as follows:

"How can one best take advantage of these programs? Perhaps a few hints from a musician who has an ardent sympathy with the average listener might be helpful. Of course, you may listen to music simply to enjoy pleasant sounds, and this in itself is a good thing. But why stop there? The main reason that so many persons like music without pretending to understand it

is that they listen quite *passively*. Now it is not at all hard to listen *actively*, and as soon as one does so, enjoyment is immensely increased and real understanding begins. To promote that understanding, to help intensify your enjoyment, to open the doors to a new world of imagination and ideas is the pleasant task of our new series, 'Understanding Opera.'"

The operatic series will supplement an already imposing list of orchestral programs presented over Columbia this fall, including concerts by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra under Klemperer, Toscanini, Sir Thomas Beecham and Hans Lange; members of the Detroit Symphony conducted by Victor Kolar; Andre Kostelanetz' Orchestra and Chorus with Lily Pons and Nino Martini; William Daly's series with world-famous soloists; the orchestras of the Curtis Institute of Music and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music respectively by Fritz Reiner and Alex von Kreiser and many other notable instrumentalists and singers.

Fifty-three more symphony concerts have been added to the National Broadcasting Company's schedules for the current season — the ten regular subscription concerts of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, twenty-eight by the Rochester Civic Orchestra, and the fifteen special Children's Concerts presented by the Rochester Civic Orchestra. All fifty-three concerts will be heard over an NBC-WJZ network through NBC's Rochester affiliate, Station WHAM.

The Rochester Philharmonic Concerts will be broadcast on Thursdays commencing November 7 and extending to March 5, excepting November 28. That week's concert will be broadcast Friday, November 29. Five of these will be evening broadcasts, from 8:15 to 9:00 P. M., EST., and five will be matinees, from 3:15 to 4:00 P. M. Conductors to be heard in this series are Jose Iturbi, who opens the series on November 7; Vladimir Golschmann; Igor Stravinsky; Fritz Reiner; Sir Hamilton Harty and Guy Fraser Harrison. These programs will be broadcast direct from the Eastman Theatre.

The Rochester Civic Orchestra concerts, conducted by Guy Fraser Harrison, will be broadcast on twenty-eight Wednesday afternoons, from 4:15 to 5:15 P. M., EST., commencing October 23.

The fifteen Children's Concerts, presented by the Rochester Civic Orchestra under the direction of Guy Fraser Harrison, will be broadcast on alternate Tuesday afternoons, 1:45 to 2:15 P. M., EST., commencing October 22.

The Hampton Institute Choir, Negro choral group of the Virginia college, has recently inaugurated a series of Saturday evening broadcasts. They are heard each week from 7:30 to 8:00 P. M., EST., over an NBC-WEAF network in a program of traditional Southern folk songs.

The choir, under the direction of Clarence Cameron White, returned to this country last year, after a highly successful tour of European cities. On that trip, they made the first appearance of any American chorus in Westminster



Abbey. The forty-voice chorus also aroused critical enthusiasm in such cities as Paris, Berlin and Vienna.

In addition to its regular repertoire of plantation melodies and spirituals, the group sings classical choral works, and will present these from time to time in their weekly broadcasts.

Children in schools for the blind throughout the United States are now able to procure in Braille, all student notebooks used in conjunction with the NBC Music Appreciation Hour, it was announced by Dr. Walter Damrosch, NBC Music Counsel.

Dr. Damrosch, director of The Music Appreciation Hour, heard each Friday over combined NBC-WJZ-WEAF networks, at 11:00 A. M., EST., has received numerous requests from blind schools throughout the country asking for a Braille interpretation of the popular manuals. Due to the heavy expense involved, it was found impossible to comply with these requests until this year.

Cooperating with the National Broadcasting Company, the American Red Cross agreed to supply all labor needed in the making of the expensive plates without any cost. The entire series of booklets, prepared by Ernest La Prade and Dr. C. H. Farnsworth, Series A, B, C and D, may now be obtained by addressing the NBC Music Appreciation Hour, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.

Commenting on the new course of music study extended to blind students, Dr. Damrosch said, "The letters received from blind schools indicate that students who have lost or have never enjoyed the faculty of sight, derive possibly an even keener pleasure from music than do those of us who are blessed with all five senses. I am happy to know that a way has been found to help these music lovers gain a still deeper insight into the masterpieces of music."

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## Behind the Scenes of Radio

WHEN poured through the microphone from the strings and brasses of Howard Barlow's Symphony Orchestra, it's difficult to imagine that those same notes are inspired only after ardent application of black coffee. However, this can be easily adduced by a visit to the musical library of the Columbia Broadcasting System, where music is dressed in special arrangements to suit the demands of CBS conductors.

Amid confusion of strictly unmusical sounds, enhanced by discordant over-tones of Madison Avenue traffic, it is here that Julius Mattfeld, music weaver in open vest, builds melody. There's no awaiting the muse when it comes to preparing a tune for the air.

Rehearsal time, three hours before the program, may find a conductor and his featured soloist without a song that fits the mood of the program. The one selected days in advance just won't, of a sudden, do at all, and Mattfeld gets his hurry-up job. It happens every now and then in one variation or another. Howard Barlow recently found himself in just such a predicament. Hopping to a phone, the redoubtable Mattfeld cleared copyrights, called in a suitable arranger, orchestrated a brand new number and had it ready for a last-minute rehearsal in two and a half hours by the clock on his busy desk.

Working over the original score, it is the arranger who breaks it down, bar after bar, into parts for every instrument in a full-sized orchestra — a man-sized job in all sense of the word. It seems to be done as swiftly as a tailor mends a suite. Next into the hands of the copyists, the arranger's master sheet is divided according to instrument and individual scores for each musician are subsequently prepared.

The facilities of the Musical Library are at call of producers of all CBS programs and behind it — justly prided by Mattfeld — is a voluminous collection of musical references. Ready to serve — accessible as a metropolitan library — are 150,000 titles of songs. Pieces of music which, laid sheet to sheet and played, would take possibly 25,000 hours or longer to play.

# Our Radio Dial

Time Indicated is Eastern Standard Time

## SUNDAY—

- 9:30 AM—Chandler Goldthwaite Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
- 10:30 AM—Music and American Youth (NBC-WEAF)
- 10:30 AM—Walberg Brown String Quartet (NBC-WJZ)
- 12:00 AM—Salt Lake City Choir and Organ (CBS-WABC)
- 12:30 PM—Radio City Music Hall (NBC-WJZ)
- 1:00 PM—Road to Romany (Gypsy Music) (NBC-WEAF)
- 2:00 PM—Symphony Orchestra, Frank Black (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:00 PM—N. Y. Philharmonic Orchestra (CBS-WABC)
- 3:45 PM—Rosa Linda, concert pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:00 PM—Chicago A Capella Choir (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Fireside Recital (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:00 PM—Master Musicians (BBS-WOR)
- 9:00 PM—Detroit Symphony with Soloists (CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—General Motors Concert (NBC-WEAF)

## MONDAY—

- 11:00 AM—NBC Light Opera Co. (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:15 PM—Lucille Manners, soprano; George Rasely, tenor (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:30 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:45 PM—Clyde Barrie, baritone (CBS-WABC)
- 6:05 PM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—Richard Crooks, tenor; Margaret Speaks, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
- 9:30 PM—Eddy Brown, violinist (BBS-WOR)

## TUESDAY—

- 11:30 AM—Hessberger's Bavarian Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
- 11:45 AM—Piano recital (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:45 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:45 PM—Rochester Civic Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
- 3:30 PM—Chamber Music Concert (BBS-WOR)
- 4:00 PM—Walden String Quartet (CBS-WABC)
- 5:00 PM—Civic Symphony Orchestra of Boston (NBC-WEAF)
- 5:45 PM—Tito Guizar, tenor (CBS-WABC)
- 6:30 PM—Understand Opera, with Howard Barlow (CBS-WABC)
- 7:45 PM—Mario Cozzi, baritone
- 8:30 PM—Voorhees Orchestra, Lawrence Tibbetts (CBS-WABC)
- 10:15 PM—Ray Heatherton, baritone; Lucille Manners, soprano (NBC-WJZ)

## WEDNESDAY—

- 10:05 AM—John Herrick, baritone (NBC-WEAF)
- 11:30 AM—U. S. Army Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Chandler Goldthwaite Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)

- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:30 PM—Rochester Civic Symphony Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
- 4:15 PM—Curtis Institute (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—John Charles Thomas (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Kostelanetz Orchestra with Soloists (CBS-WABC)
- 9:30 PM—Ray Noble and his Orchestra (CBS-WABC)

## THURSDAY—

- 11:30 AM—U. S. Navy Band (NBC-WJZ)
- 11:30 AM—(Nov. 7th only) Cleveland Orchestra Rehearsal (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:15 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
- 1:30 PM—Julia Glass, pianist; Phyllis Kraeuter, cellist (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Matinee Musicale (NBC-WEAF)
- 2:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WJZ)
- 7:30 PM—Music Is My Hobby (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:15 PM—Rochester Philharmonic Concert (NBC-WJZ)
- 8:30 PM—Little Sym. Orch. — Philip Lawes (BBS-WOR)
- 9:30 PM—World Peaceways (CBS-WABC)
- 10:00 PM—Paul Whiteman's Music Hall (NBC-WEAF)

## FRIDAY—

- 11:00 AM—Music Appreciation Hour (NBC-WEAF-WJZ)
- 2:30 PM—Rosa Linda, pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 5:45 PM—Tito Guizar, tenor (CBS-WABC)
- 8:00 PM—Cities Service Concert (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:30 PM—Broadway Varieties — Carmela Ponselle (CBS-WABC)
- 9:00 PM—Hollywood Hotel — Igor Gorin, baritone (CBS-WABC)
- 10:30 PM—N. Y. Chamber Music Society (NBC-WJZ)

## SATURDAY—

- 11:15 AM—Clyde Barrie, baritone (CBS-WABC)
- 10:30 AM—Mathay's Gypsy Orchestra (NBC-WEAF)
- 11:00 AM—Cincinnati Cons. of Music (CBS-WABC)
- 11:30 AM—The Whitney Ensemble (NBC-WJZ)
- 2:00 PM—Rex Battle's Concert Ensemble (NBC-WEAF)
- 3:30 PM—NBC Music Guild (NBC-WEAF)
- 4:00 PM—Carol Deis, soprano (NBC-WEAF)
- 5:00 PM—Alma Schirmer, concert pianist (NBC-WJZ)
- 6:35 PM—Alma Kitchell, contralto (NBC-WEAF)
- 7:30 PM—Hampton Institute Singers (NBC-WEAF)
- 8:15 PM—Boston Symphony Orchestra (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:00 PM—Kostelanetz's Orch. with Nino Martini (CBS-WABC)
- 9:15 PM—Russian Symphonic Choir (NBC-WJZ)
- 9:15 PM—Chicago Symphony Orchestra (BBS-WOR)

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